

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend paragraph [0008] as follows:

The invention provides a semiconductor structure comprising a substrate; a first layer adjacent to the substrate, the first layer comprising a first material having a first modulus of elasticity; a first structure comprising a conductor and formed within the ~~first layer substrate~~, the first structure having an upper surface and a lower surface; and a stress diverting structure proximate the first structure and within the first layer, wherein the stress diverting structure provides a low mechanical stress region at the upper surface of the first structure when a physical load is applied to the first structure. The stress diverting structure comprises a second material having a second modulus of elasticity less than the first modulus of elasticity, the second material selectively formed over the upper surface of the first structure for diverting mechanical stress created by the physical load applied to the first structure. Moreover, the stress diverting structure comprises a third material having a second modulus of elasticity greater than the first modulus of elasticity, the third material surroundingly encompassing the first structure for diverting mechanical stress created by the physical load applied to the first structure. Moreover, in one embodiment, the stress diverting structure is cubical. Furthermore, the low mechanical stress region comprises stress values at levels below the stress values in areas in the semiconductor structure unprotected by the stress diverting structure. Also, according to an embodiment of the invention, the first structure is formed adjacent to the first layer.

Please amend paragraph [0009] as follows:

Additionally, the invention provides a semiconductor structure comprising a substrate; an active device region embedded within the substrate; a filler layer over the substrate, the filler

layer comprising a material having a first modulus of elasticity; a bondpad over the filler layer, wherein the filler layer comprises a plurality of metal/via levels formed upwardly from the active device region to the bondpad; and a shield configured over the active device region and within the filler layer, wherein the shield comprises a material having a second modulus of elasticity different than the first modulus of elasticity, wherein the shield terminates at any of a first and second metal/via level above the substrate, wherein the shield provides a low mechanical stress region on the active device region when a physical load is applied to the bondpad above the active device region, and wherein the low mechanical stress region comprises stress values at levels below stress values in areas in the semiconductor structure unprotected by the shield. Moreover, in an embodiment of the invention, the shield comprises a material having a modulus of elasticity higher than the first modulus of elasticity. Additionally, in another embodiment of the invention, the shield comprises a material having a modulus of elasticity lower than the first modulus of elasticity.

Please amend paragraph [0011] as follows:

Another embodiment of the invention provides a method for forming a stress diverting semiconductor structure, wherein the method comprises forming a first layer adjacent to a substrate, whereby the first layer comprises a first material comprising a first modulus of elasticity; forming a first structure within the first layer substrate, whereby the first structure comprises an upper surface and a lower surface; and forming a stress diverting structure proximate the first structure and within the first layer, wherein the stress diverting structure provides a low mechanical stress region at the upper surface of the first structure when a physical load is applied to the first structure. According to an embodiment of the invention, the first

structure is formed adjacent to the first layer. Additionally, the low mechanical stress region comprises stress values at levels below stress values in areas in the semiconductor structure unprotected by the stress diverting structure.

Please amend paragraph [0041] as follows:

A method of forming a stress diverting semiconductor structure of the invention is shown in the flow diagram of Figure 13. The method comprises forming 100 a first layer 30 over a substrate 10, wherein the first layer 30 comprises a first material comprising a first modulus of elasticity. Next, a first structure 20 is formed 110 within the ~~first layer 30~~ substrate 10, wherein the first structure 20 comprises an upper surface 21 and a lower surface 22. According to an embodiment of the invention, the first structure 20 is formed adjacent to the first layer 30. Then, a stress diverting structure 40, 50 is formed 120 proximate to the first structure 20 and within the first layer 30, wherein the stress diverting structure 40, 50 provides a low mechanical stress region at the upper surface 21 of the first structure 20 when a physical load is applied to the first structure 20.

Please amend paragraph [0042] as follows:

Accordingly, the semiconductor structure provided by the invention comprises a substrate 10; an active device region 20 embedded within the substrate 10; a filler layer 30 over the substrate 10, wherein the filler layer 30 comprises a material having a first modulus of elasticity; a bondpad 5 over the filler layer 30, wherein the filler layer 30 comprises a plurality of metal/via levels 60, 65 formed upwardly from the active device region 20 to the bondpad 5; and a shield 40, 50 configured over the active device region 20 and within the filler layer 30, wherein the

shield 40, 50 comprises a material having a second modulus of elasticity different than the first modulus of elasticity, wherein the shield 40, 50 terminates at any of a first and second metal/via level 60, 65 above the substrate 10, and wherein the shield 40, 50 provides a low mechanical stress region at the upper surface 21 of the active device region 20 when a physical load is applied to the bondpad 5, which is therein translated to the active device region 20. Moreover, in an embodiment of the invention, the shielding structure comprises a material 40 having a modulus of elasticity higher than the first modulus of elasticity. Additionally, in another embodiment of the invention, the shielding structure comprises a material 50 having a modulus of elasticity lower than the first modulus of elasticity. Accordingly, those skilled in the art would understand that the invention may be incorporated in an integrated circuit device, wherein logic circuitry (not shown) may be configured to the substrate 10.